
Mr. Lathrop's
DISCOURSE,

Occasioned by the **DEATH**

OF HIS

C O N S O R T.

Mr. Lathrop's

DISCOURSE



Occasioned by his

DEATH

CONGREGATION

Consolation for Mourners, from the
Doctrine of a Resurrection, and the
future happiness of Believers.

A
DISCOURSE

Occasioned by the DEATH
OF
Mrs. MARY LATHROP,

Who departed this Life 24th
September, 1778.

Aged 35.

Delivered the Lord's Day after the Funeral.

BY
Her afflicted Consort, K
JOHN LATHROP. A.M.

Pastor of the Second Church in BOSTON.

Published at the desire of many who heard it,
and the particular acquaintance of the deceased.

"Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be
"able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the
"comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."

APOSTLE PAUL.

B O S T O N :

Printed by WHITE and ADAMS, next Door to the
Cromwell's-Head Tavern, in School-Street, 1779.

Consolation for Mourners, from the
Doctrine of a Resurrection, and the
future happiness of Believers.

DISCOURSE

Occasioned by the DEATH
OF
M^{RS}. MARY LATHROP.

Who departed this life 24th

September 8.



Delivered the 1st of October the Present

BY

Her afflicted Consort,

JOHN LATHROP, A.M.

Pastor of the Second Church in Boston.

Published at the desire of many who heard it,
and the particular acquaintance of the deceased.

The comfort of an all our consolation, that we may be
able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the
consolation which we ourselves are witnesses of God.
ASTORIA: FIVE.

B O S T O N

Printed by WHITE and A. A. M. at the
Commercial Press, in School Street, 1849.

A

Funeral Discourse.

I. Theſſalonians, IV. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18.

“ But I would not have you to be ignorant brethren,
“ concerning them which are aſleep, that ye ſorrow
“ not even as others which have no hope.

“ For if we believe that Jeſus died and roſe again,
“ even ſo them alſo which ſleep in Jeſus, will God
“ bring with him.

“ For this we ſay unto you by the word of the Lord,
“ that we which are alive and remain unto the
“ coming of the Lord, ſhall not prevent them which
“ are aſleep.

“ For the Lord himſelf ſhall deſcend from Heaven with
“ a ſhout, with the voice of the archangel, and with
“ the tramp of God: And the dead in Chriſt ſhall
“ riſe firſt;

“ Then we which are alive, and remain, ſhall be
“ caught up together with them in the clouds to
“ meet the Lord in the air; and ſo ſhall we ever
“ be with the Lord,

“ Wherefore comfort one another with theſe words.”

THE introduction of Sin into our world,
has been followed with an awful train of
evils. Pain, and ſickneſs, and death
have ſpread all over the earth. Death
has reigned from Adam to the preſent day. Mil-
lions after millions have fallen before him, and
now lie buried under “ the clods of the valley.”

BUT notwithstanding the king of terrors hath made such dreadful havock, and yet unsatisfied is devouring all before him.—Notwithstanding the grave hath never yet said, “It is enough.” and we must go into that gloomy house which is “appointed for all living,” blessed be God, we may hope for life and happiness in a future state. Blessed be God for the gift of his Son Jesus Christ, “who hath abolished death, and brought “life and immortality to light, through the gospel.” Blessed be God for those consolations which the Gospel affords us in the days of sorrow and mourning.

You will allow me to say, I find the need of those consolations in my present affliction, and while I am seeking for them in the holy Scriptures, something perhaps may be suggested which shall administer comfort to you, my brethren, when in like trouble.

PARTING with those dear friends, with whom we early formed the most important of all temporal connections, is extremely painful. On such occasions we need support far superior to what can be derived from any other source than that of religion. And did we accustom ourselves to meditate on the great things which are brought to view in the sacred writings:—Did we think often and seriously on the second coming of our *Lord Jesus Christ*, when he shall raise all who sleep in the dust, from the confinement of the grave:—Did we frequently meditate on the happy meeting which the pious shall then have with their most valuable friends and companions: Did we meditate on the eternity of complete felicity which lies before us, if we are the children of God by faith, and now walk in his commandments:—I say, did we meditate on these things,

it would have a happy tendency to reconcile us to our own dissolution, and to that providence which calls us to part with those whom we love as our own soul.

As the resurrection of the body, together with that change which shall pass on such of the people of God as shall be found alive at the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, together with the happiness which all who believe in him shall enjoy forever, are important doctrines contained in the passage before us ; it may not be an unprofitable exercise for us at this time, to consider the following particulars :

- I. The certainty of a general resurrection.
- II. The time when this great event shall take place.
- III. The surprising change which shall pass on such of the people of God as shall then be alive.
- IV. The happiness of those who shall be admitted to dwell forever with the Lord.
- V. The hope which the scriptures afford us that our pious friends, who have fallen into the sleep of death, are now happy, and at the general resurrection shall be raised from the confinement of the grave, and be made completely blessed forever, is excellently suited to alleviate our sorrows, and reconcile us to that providence which calls us to part with them.

To these particulars I would ask your attention, and then close the discourse with a few serious reflections.

I. THEN, we are to consider the certainty of a resurrection.

THE light of nature being utterly insufficient to scatter the gloomy shades of mortality, we are wholly indebted to divine revelation for the knowledge of a resurrection. Many of the hea-

then indeed supposed that human souls exist after this life, and that in a future state they are treated by their Judge, according to the merit or demerit of their actions; however they had no expectation of being raised from the dead. They never imagined that the bodies which they saw burnt to ashes on the funeral pile, shall be animated anew, and raised up to life. Hence when St. Paul preached the doctrine of the resurrection, to one of the most learned assemblies then in the world,—The philosophers at Athens, “They mocked.” It seemed to them, as it did to king Agrippa, “a thing incredible, that God should raise the dead.”

THIS being a doctrine of divine revelation, it will be proper for us to look into some passages of the inspired writings, where it is clearly expressed.

THERE are many places in the holy scriptures, where the doctrine of a resurrection is expressed in the clearest terms: In other places it is fairly implied.

GIVE me leave to mention one place where this doctrine is implied, before we attend to those passages where it is taught expressly.—God said to Abraham as in Genesis xvii. 7. “I will establish my covenant between me and thee, for an everlasting covenant; to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.”

THAT this is no other than the covenant of grace, and that it contains in it an implicit assurance of a resurrection, our Lord has fully taught us, as in the xxii. of Matthew.—The Sadducees having mentioned the case of a woman, who had buried seven husbands and desired our Lord to say whose wife she should be of the seven in the resurrection world, He answered them, “Ye do err not knowing the scriptures nor the power

“ of God. For in the resurrection, they neither
 “ marry, nor are given in the marriage, but are
 “ as the angels of God in Heaven.—But as
 “ touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye
 “ not read that which was spoken unto you by
 “ God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and
 “ the God Isaac, and the God of Jacob ; God is
 “ not the God of the dead, but of the living.”
 Our Lord on this occasion refers the Sadduces to
 that repetition of the covenant which he was
 pleased to make unto Moses, as recorded in the
 third Chapter of Exodus.

THE proof of a resurrection from this cove-
 nant, as explained by our Lord himself, who is
 the author of it, lies in the promise. God pro-
 mised he would be the God of Abraham, and of
 his seed after him. “ I am the God of Abraham,
 and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.”
 But those Patriarchs, though in covenant with
 God, were not exempted from the stroke of
 death ; they saw corruption and returned to the
 dust. However, we are taught that God would
 not have declared himself to be the God of
 Abraham and his seed, if he had intended to leave
 them forever under the confinement of the grave :
 “ God is not the God of the dead but of the
 living ;” therefore according to our Lord’s own
 explanation, the dead must be raised up, “ for
 all live unto him.” The dead must be raised up,
 or the promise of the covenant could not be ful-
 filled ; but the covenant is “ ordered in all things
 and sure.” The resurrection of those who are
heirs of the covenant, is therefore certain.

BEFORE we leave this argument, I would just
 observe, the great things contained in the cove-
 nant of grace, are not confined to those who de-
 scend from the loins of Abraham by ordinary ge-

neration, but they are common to believers of all nations. St. Paul hath expressly told us, the blessing of Abraham hath come upon us Gentiles. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, for it is written, cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree : that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ."

SHOULD any now enquire, What are we to understand by the blessing of Abraham? The answer, no doubt will be—The blessing contained in that promise which God made to Abraham, that he would be his God, and the God of his posterity.—As the blessing of Abraham, or the blessing contained in the covenant which God made with Abraham, hath come upon the Gentiles through Jesus Christ, a resurrection is made certain to believers of all nations.

THAT the covenant which we have been considering, the covenant which God made with Abraham "the father of the faithful," cannot be understood as containing *only* temporal blessings, is certain from the declaration of St. Paul, that the blessing of Abraham hath come on the Gentiles ; but the blessing of Abraham had not then, nor hath it since come on the Gentiles in a worldly sense. Gentile believers have never had the land of canaan as a possession, nor have they ever been distinguishingly favoured in temporal respects. The blessing of Abraham therefore must have respect to the promise which God made, that he would be the God of Abraham, and of his seed after him, which promise contains spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus, and a resurrection unto life eternal.

WE have been the longer on this argument in proof of a resurrection, from the promise of the covenant made with Abraham, because it was by

this argument our Lord was pleased to establish the doctrine, and confound the Sadduces who denied it.

THE discourse which our Lord had with the Sadduces on this subject sufficiently proves, that all the heirs of the covenant shall be raised up from the confinement of the grave; for as God is not the God of the dead but of the living, those who have him for their God in covenant, shall infallibly live unto him.—There are other passages of scripture which make it equally certain that the whole race of Adam shall be raised from the grave.

OUR Lord asserted the doctrine of a general resurrection in the clearest terms, in that discourse which we have recorded in the v. Chap. of John. “As the father hath life in himself, so
“hath he given to the son to have life in himself;
“and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the son of man. Marvel not at this for the hour is coming in the
“which all that are in the graves shall hear his
“voice, and shall come forth, they that have done
“good unto the resurrection of life, and they
“that have done evil unto the resurrection of
“damnation.”—What solemn words are these! They are the words of Christ himself: The words of him who is *the truth*, and cannot deceive. He declares “all that are in the graves shall come forth.”—That voice which at first spake the universe into existence—which said, “Let there be light, and there was light,” that same voice is sufficient to give life to the millions which are now buried in the earth.—It shall awake the slumbering world.—We, my brethren, shall hear it, though our flesh may then have been long consumed, and mingled with common dust.

How deeply interested are we in the events of that great day, when Christ shall raise the dead! It will either be the most joyous, or dreadful, that ever our eyes beheld.—If we are now the conscientious servants of Jesus Christ, and continue in obedience to his precepts to the end of life, we shall be raised up to immortal happiness.—We shall spring from the grave with a joy unknown before, and all glorious, ascend to meet the great Redeemer. We shall be openly acquitted at the final judgment. We shall be introduced to the society of the blessed, and begin our eternity of happiness in the love of all holy beings, and the uninterrupted friendship of the blessed Redeemer.

BUT if it shall then appear that any of us have habitually indulged ourselves in wickedness—That we have followed the desires of the flesh and of the mind, equally regardless of the divine authority and the unspeakable grace of the gospel, we shall be condemned before the assembled universe, and sentenced to an awful perdition; for our Lord hath declared, they that have done evil, shall come forth, *unto the resurrection of damnation.*

SAINT JOHN had a vision of the general resurrection, as in the xx Chap. of that book which closes the New-Testament. “And I saw the
“ dead small and great stand before God; and
“ the books were opened; and another book
“ was opened which is the book of life. And
“ they were judged out of those things which
“ were written in the books, according to their
“ works. And the sea gave up the dead which
“ were in it; and death and hell gave up the
“ dead which were in them; and they were
“ judged every man according to their works.”

THE doctrine of a general resurrection is so frequently introduced, and so clearly expressed in the New-Testament, that no one can question the certainty of it, who receives those writings on the authority of divine inspiration.

ACCORDING to the method proposed, we shall now,

II dly. Mention the time when a general resurrection shall take place.

AND here we are not about to say, at what period since the creation, or the birth of our Lord, the dead shall be raised up; "of that day and hour" knoweth no man, no not the angels of Heaven, but the Father only." We can only point out the time of the resurrection, as it is connected with another solemn event, viz. the second coming of Jesus Christ.

SAINT PAUL asserts in the passage before us, "The Lord himself shall descend from Heaven" "with a shout, with the voice of the arch-angel," "and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first."—Our Lord made frequent mention of his second coming, and the design of it.—"When the Son of man shall come" "in his glory, and all his holy angels with him," "then shall he set upon the throne of his glory." "And before him shall be gathered all nations," "and he shall separate them one from another," "as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats."

WHEN the Son of God shall come the second time, he will take his seat as the judge of the world. And that justice may be done to every creature, the grave and the invisible world shall deliver up all the dead that are in them.

THE time then in which the dead shall be raised up, is the same as that in which the Son of God shall summon all the numerous offspring of Adam to appear before him.

THIS leads us,

IIIdly. To take notice of the surprising change which shall pass on such of the people of God as shall be alive at the time of the general resurrection.

SAINT PAUL has let us know, the Son of man shall make his second appearance at a time when the event shall not be expected. "For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night." Inasmuch as the inhabitants of the world in general shall not be looking out for their Lord and Judge, we may suppose in general they will be unprepared for his coming. We are assured the wicked shall be struck with inexpressible amazement: They shall wail and lament when they shall behold the Son of man coming in the clouds of Heaven. Their guilty conscience shall condemn them, and a sense of their ill-deserts anticipate the final sentence of their Judge.

AND not only will impenitent sinners be unprepared for the coming of the Lord, and altogether unfit to enter into the heavenly world, but those who have some established principles of holiness, and an habitual desire to keep the divine commandments, will need a great change in order to their being companions for the blessed above, and fit to dwell in the immediate presence of a holy God.—We must be sanctified throughout, in spirit, in soul and in body, before we can enter upon the employments of the celestial State. Our animal desires were designed only for the present mode of existence; and those desires, the christian is free to own are now become vicious. Our very nature is corrupt; our animal propensities are degenerated into lusts and evil affections.

THOSE evil propensities which give the true christian the greatest uneasiness, and occasion the deep-

est sorrows he feels in the present life, will not be wholly subdued while these bodies remain what they now are.— These bodies which ought to be “temples of the holy ghost,” are receptacles of uncleanness. They are so awfully defiled that it is necessary they should be intirely demolished by death, and be made anew, or that they pass a change equal to that of death and the resurrection, in order to their being fit for the kingdom of God.—“Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.” This natural or animal body, must be changed for a spiritual body, and this corruptable must put on incorruption, before we shall be prepared for glory.

WHAT a spiritual body is, or what kind of change shall pass upon those who shall be found alive at the second coming of Jesus Christ, we cannot say. No doubt the resurrection bodies, and the bodies of those saints which shall be alive when Christ shall appear to Judge the world, will be, in all respects alike.—The great change will be effected, “in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump.”

THE unwieldy carcass which is now with difficulty moved from place to place, shall be changed for a body such as God shall please to give, active as the angels of light; fitted to rise thro’ the regions of the air, and meet the Lord, attended with the innumerable host of Heaven.

OUR bodies which are now the habitations of diseases, and are subject to death, after the change, which we have been considering, shall have no seeds of mortality within them: And what is of more importance, they shall never harbor one desire inconsistent with the divine pleasure.

SUCH a change is indeed desirable. The true christian who is now agonizing with his spiritual enemies—struggling with the corrupt propensities of his mind, and endeavoring with all his might

to subdue those "lusts which war against the soul," looks forward with pleasure to the day of the appearing of Jesus Christ. The hope of being delivered from this vile body, and of being furnished with a spiritual body, intirely free from unholy desires, and suited to the transporting employments of the heavenly state, will excite the christian, at some happy seasons, to cry, "come Lord Jesus come quickly."——We pass now,

IVthly, To consider the happiness of those who shall be admitted to dwell for ever with the Lord.

WE may conceive the happiness of those will be great who shall be admitted to dwell forever with the Lord, when we consider them as being secure from all kind of suffering. They shall feel no wants unsatisfied, no desires unanswered. They shall be secure from every kind of affliction, from pain, from sickness and from death. They shall have no sorrow or sighing—Grief shall never swell their bosom.—Their eyes shall never weep with their own distresses, or in tender sympathy with others in their sufferings.—They shall be out of the reach of all temptation, and feel no exercise of unholy passions.

BUT what we have now mentined is only a small part of the happiness which those shall enjoy, who shall be admitted to dwell forever with the Lord. Indeed we can form but a very imperfect idea of their happiness. In general however we are taught, that the happiness of those who shall be admitted into Heaven, will consist in their being like Christ. Behold says John, in the III^d. Chap. of his 1st Epistle, "Behold what manner of love the father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God.—" "Beloved now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, But we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."

OUR blessed Redeemer, in that solemn address which he put up to the Father just before his crucifixion, prayed that all who should believe on him, might be with him to behold his glory.—Those must be happy indeed who shall be intirely free from every impure desire—who shall be perfectly conformed to the blessed Jesus in the temper of their mind; and having their supreme affection placed on him, shall be admitted into his immediate presence, and be allowed to behold him forever in his glory.

FURTHER we may conceive, the happiness of those who shall be admitted into Heaven will rise from the company they shall keep, from the employments they shall be engaged in, and from the certain knowledge that their employments shall never end.

WHILE in the present life, we are pleased with the company and conversation of those who agree with us in sentiment, and whose temper and disposition are like our own. If our mind is serious, we love to converse with the serious: If it is inquisitive we love to converse with those who are able to inform us.—What delight then must we take in mingling with the patriarchs, those venerable fathers who first planted our world:—With Adam, with Enoch and Noah—with Abraham, with Isaac and with Jacob—with the prophets, and all the saints who went to Heaven, before the coming of our Lord! How pleasing must it be to converse with the Apostles of Jesus, and those who lived in the first ages of the Church;—with the company of martyrs, and all the truly pious who have been received to Heaven since the gospel dispensation! Besides those pleasing acts of worship, in which the whole church of the first born on high will join, with one heart, and one voice, no doubt the blessed inhabitants of that world will be much

in conversation, and cultivate the most intimate acquaintance with each other.

WHAT delightful entertainment will it be for pious souls, who have lived in every period of the world, to form into familiar circles, and talk over what they have heard and what they have seen, in the different times and places of their pilgrimage!—How exquisite will be our joy when we shall meet with our dear friends and connections, the companions of our soul, who have already gone to Heaven! Perhaps they will be the first to receive us on our arrival, and with the purest expressions of love, bid us welcome, welcome to the paradise of God, the realms of pure delight, of happiness which shall never be interrupted.

How the blessed in Heaven shall be forever employed, we are not able particularly to say: No doubt in ways suited to their benevolent dispositions, their peculiarly advantageous circumstances to honor their Redeemer, and serve the best interests of the universe. We are by no means to consider our pious friends, who have departed this life, as lost. They are employed, they are nobly employed; and perhaps we may receive unspeakable kindnesses from them, “while in the house of our pilgrimage.”

BUT whatever we may suppose is contained in the general idea of the happiness which the Saints shall enjoy in Heaven, it is eternity which gives importance to the whole.—When we view them not only free from all imperfection, but possessed of the greatest possible good, in the friendly presence of their glorious Redeemer, and in the company of saints and angels, and all the blessed above, we are to consider their happiness will never end: Yea, it will increase for ever and ever. They will be constantly making further discoveries of the divine perfections and government: Their capacities will therefore be constantly enlarging, and those ever enlarging capacities will be always full.

—But we are lost in the contemplation: Well may we say, “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.”

O CHRISTIAN! meditations on the blessedness of the heavenly world must excite within you warm desires after that glorious state. Don't you sometimes wish to drop this house of clay, this body of sin and death, that you may have “a building of God, on house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens?” Don't you wish to quit these regions of mortality and guilt, that you may ascend on high, and join with the innumerable hosts of angels, and the spirits of just made perfect in acts of the purest worship, and the most improving conversation?—Be patient a little longer, and your ardent wishes shall be gratified: “For yet a little while and he that shall come, will come and will not tarry”—Every pain you feel reminds you of an approaching dissolution.—Whenever you are called to part with a dear friend, an acquaintance, a pleasant companion, you are reminded that the time is hastning on when you shall be released from the sorrows, the temptations, and the labours of this imperfect state, and be admitted into the kingdom of your Lord.

THIS is indeed a delightful subject, I know not how to leave it; but it is time for me to ask your attention to the,

Vth, And last thing proposed.—We are now to observe,

THE hope which the scriptures afford us, that our pious friends, who have fallen into the sleep of death are now happy, and at the general resurrection shall be raised from the confinement of the grave, and be made compleatly blessed forever, is excellently suited to alleviate our sorrows, and reconcile us to that providence which calls us to part with them.

FOR the honor of the religion which I profess, think myself bound to say, this hope affords me

no small comfort in my present affliction.—God, in his wise providence, hath been pleased to bring the shades of death over my family : “ He hath
 “ taken from me, the desire of mine eyes, with a
 “ stroke.”—This dispensation of divine providence is painful, far beyond any thing that I have before met with——

SUCH of you, my brethren, as have been blessed with a prudent, discreet and amiable companion, the wife of your youth, who loved you sincerely, and with whom you lived from the day that made you *one*, to the solemn moment when death was commissioned, to separate you, not merely in harmony, but with increasing affection and esteem of each other :—Who always rejoiced when you rejoiced, and grieved when you were in heaviness ; Who to the utmost of her strength, and even above her strength looked to the affairs of your family, and watched over your tender offspring ;—Who enlivened you with the unaffected cheerfulness of her countenance, and made your house pleasant to the stranger that visited you, as well as to the circle of your more intimate acquaintance :—In fine, who loved the exercises of devotion ; and with great meekness, with a deep sense of unworthiness and ill-desert before God, humbly hoped for pardon and eternal life, only through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ ;—I say, such of you my brethren, as have been blessed with such a companion, and then deprived of her by death, can truly sympathize with me.

WERE I at liberty, I should think myself bound, not only from affection to the dead, but a hope of promoting the good of the living, to inform you more particularly, what temper of mind, my late agreeable companion discovered, especially towards the close of her life, but she forbade me. I hope I shall not transgress her orders, as I am sure I shall not the bounds of truth, when I say,—she supported under afflictions, some of which were of a peculiarly trying nature, with uncommon patience.—Under

her long weakness, in which she endured great distress, never was a murmuring word heard from her lips. She viewed her dissolution coming on with calmness ; and often said, she did not wish to recover health, and be exposed again to the temptations of this evil world, unless it were to honor her Lord and Redeemer, more than ever she had done.

SUCH was the profession of religion which she made, when her mind was seriously impressed, and such the conduct of her life, that I derive great consolation from the hope that she is now happy : And that after the resurrection, we shall meet again, and be allowed to partake together of that perfect felicity which shall then be confirmed to the heirs of the promise.—May you my dear friends, receive like consolation, when called to part with those you love !

NOTHING can be more exactly suited to afford comfort when we are bereaved of pious friends, than the assurance of a resurrection, when we hope to meet them under every possible advantage for improvement in friendship, and the purest enjoyment, never more to part.—Had we a clear sense of this important doctrine upon our mind, we should almost wish to hear the triumph of God, and see the dead arise.

AN expectation of meeting with those of our friends, who we have reason to think are gone before us into heaven, should certainly calm our mind, in the day of affliction, and serve to reconcile us to that providence which calls us to part with them.

SOME reflections from what hath been said, shall close the discourse.

WHAT blessings do we find contained in the covenant of grace !—In consequence of the first transgression, the whole race of Adam became exposed to the sentence of death.—Dust we are, and unto dust we must return.—The body which is

now delicately fed, and treated with the utmost tenderness, must ere long turn to corruption.—Our friends however fond of us, at present, will find them selves under the sad necessity of burying us out of their sight. We may all say with Job, “The grave is mine house, I have made my bed in the darkness—I have said to corruption thou art my father, and to the worm, thou art my mother and my sister.”—But however gloomy this language may be, however universal the empire of death has been, the gospel gives us assurance of a resurrection : a resurrection is secured in the covenant of grace : It is purchased by Jesus Christ: It is settled in the divine constitution ; and the believer may expect it with as much confidence as any of the blessings promised in the gospel.—The doctrine of a resurrection is exceeding comfortable.—Why should the believer fear death, when he is assured that Jesus Christ hath conquered that last enemy, and brought life and immortality to light by the gospel ! Why should the believer fear death, when he is assured by him who hath the keys of the invisible world that there shall be a glorious resurrection ! . Why should the people of God be terrified and made unhappy in their mind because these corruptable bodies must ere long turn to the dust, since they have a promise of spiritual bodies in their place ! Certainly they can be no losers by such an exchange —It is a want of faith which occasions us to shudder at the thought of being unclothed, since there is full assurance given in the holy scriptures, that at the resurrection the true believer shall be clothed upon greatly to his advantage.

BUT let it be remembered the unspeakable blessings, which we have been considering belong to none but those who truly believe on the Son of God. None may plead a right to the blessings contained in the covenant of grace, but such as believe that Jesus is the Christ, and humbly submit to him as their Redeemer.—In proportion to

the evidence which our departed friends have left us that they were sincere believers in the blessed Jesus, will our hope be, that they are now happy, and that their resurrection will be glorious. — And in proportion to the evidence which we are able to collect, that *we* are believers, will be the strength of our hope with respect to ourselves.

LET us then look into our heart and examine it with care. It is of great importance that we obtain some good degree of satisfaction with respect to our moral state. It is of great importance to our present comfort, but we shall find it unspeakably more so, as we draw towards the close of life. — How could we endure the thought of dying, if we had no good hope towards God ! How could we bear to think of passing into an eternal world, if, upon examination, we could find no good reason to conclude, that we are, by faith, heirs of the covenant of promise ! There is no sight more shocking, than that of a poor mortal, dying under a sense of guilt ; — Going out of the present state without any good reason to hope for acceptance with God. — How dreadful to enter the eternal world, without one ray of the divine countenance to enlighten the passage ! How dreadful to think of appearing before a judge, whose authority we have abused, and whose mercy we have slighted all our days ! I pray God, none of us may feel this pain ! And that we may be secure from such dreadful apprehensions ; let us humble ourselves before that glorious being whom we have offended by our transgressions. — Let us sincerely repent of all our sins, and cheerfully comply with the requisitions of the gospel.

BUT to conclude ; If any of us upon serious examination, find reason to determine, that we are interested in the promises of the covenant of grace, then let us honor our divine master, not only by a general compliance with the intimations

of his will, but by gratefully receiving that consolation which his religion affords.—Let us submit to the calamities of this Life, with calmness and resignation of soul, praying that we may learn obedience by the things that we suffer.—Let us endeavor to rise above the fear of death.—Let us accustom ourselves to look into the invisible world, assisted by that light which the gospel affords.—Let us look forward to the resurrection with joy, when we expect to see our Lord in glory, and meet with all our precious friends who have already gone to Heaven.—Let us endeavor to have our mind constantly impressed with this great, this most animating doctrine, *The resurrection of the dead*. And when he who is the believer's life shall appear, God grant we may appear with him in glory; and may “an enterance be ministered” unto us abundantly into his everlasting kingdom, and so may we be ever with the LORD.”

A M E N.

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